

<b>DOCKETED</b>	
<b>Docket Number:</b>	24-OPT-02
<b>Project Title:</b>	Compass Energy Storage Project
<b>TN #:</b>	263782
<b>Document Title:</b>	Tribal Consultation Letter
<b>Description:</b>	Initial invitation for consultation
<b>Filer:</b>	William Larson
<b>Organization:</b>	California Energy Commission
<b>Submitter Role:</b>	Commission Staff
<b>Submission Date:</b>	6/3/2025 12:55:14 PM
<b>Docketed Date:</b>	6/3/2025



May 5, 2025

Heide Lucero, Chairperson  
Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation 84A  
31411-A La Matanza Street  
San Juan Capistrano, CA, 92675

Dear Honorable Chairperson Heide Lucero:

The California Energy Commission (CEC) is responsible for preparing an environmental impact report and other findings for the Compass Energy Storage Project and invites Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation 84A to consult regarding this project. The CEC will conduct tribal consultation in accordance with the Public Resources Code, sections 21080.3.1 and 25545.7.4, as well as California Code of Regulations, Title 20, section 1878.5. This consultation would focus on environmental impact and mitigation issues and is an opportunity to have your input inform the staff analysis of the proposed project. The CEC staff received a positive result from a Sacred Lands File search from the California Native American Heritage Commission and would like to consult with you to better understand the concerns of California Native American tribes regarding this project.

## **Background**

Compass Energy Storage LLC (applicant) filed an opt-in application on April 11, 2024, for the Compass Energy Storage Project, a battery energy storage system (BESS) proposed in San Juan Capistrano, Orange County, California. On May 13 and October 7, 2024, the CEC deemed the application incomplete and docketed letters detailing the information deficiencies. On April 30, 2025, after receiving additional data, the CEC staff determined that the application was complete.

## **Project Location and Existing Conditions**

The project site consists of approximately 12.4 acres of an approximately 40.8-acre parcel in San Juan Capistrano, California. The project also includes approximately 1.8 acres of offsite components (access road). The project site is located within the northern portion of the city, adjacent to Camino Capistrano with Interstate-5 located to the east. The project site is utilized by the current owner, Saddleback Church, for ancillary activities and is adjacent to the Saddleback Church Rancho Capistrano to the north, mostly open space to the south, Oso Creek to the south and east, Metrolink Railroad and Interstate-5 to the east, and open space and residences outside of the city limits to the west. The San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) Trabuco to Capistrano 138 kV

transmission line is located approximately 500 feet to the east and runs alongside the Metrolink Railroad tracks.

## **Project Description**

The project is a battery energy storage system (BESS) that would be capable of storing up to 250 megawatts (MW) of electricity for four hours (up to 1,000 MW hours). The project would be composed of lithium-iron phosphate batteries (Tesla Megapack 2XL is proposed) inverters, medium-voltage transformers, a switchyard, a collector substation, and other associated equipment to interconnect into the existing SDG&E Trabuco to Capistrano 138-kilovolt transmission line located approximately 500 feet from the project site and approximately 90 feet from the project property. The project would connect to the SDG&E electric transmission system via a proposed "loop-in" transmission line that would be constructed to transfer power to and from the proposed project. The loop-in transmission line would be supported by the replacement of two existing transmission poles and construction of one new transmission pole.

Electric energy would be transferred from the existing power grid to the project batteries for storage and from the project batteries to the power grid when additional electricity is needed. No off-site transmission upgrades are required for the full capacity of this project, and an interconnection agreement with SDG&E and the California Independent System Operator has been implemented. Following construction of the switchyard by Compass Energy Storage LLC, ownership and operations of the switchyard would transfer to SDG&E.

Additional information about the proposed project is available at the locations provided in the links below.

- Direct link to the Project Description:  
<https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/GetDocument.aspx?tn=255535-2&DocumentContentId=91278>
- Update Regarding the Selected Battery Storage Technology and Fire Protection (including update to Section 2, Project Description):  
<https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/GetDocument.aspx?tn=259023&DocumentContentId=95093>
- Compass Site Plan Update:  
<https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/GetDocument.aspx?tn=262127&DocumentContentId=98638>
- Direct link to the Cultural Resources Section of the Application: [Cultural Resources Section](#)
- Compass Energy Storage Project Docket (24-OPT-02) includes the project application files and project filings:  
<https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=24-OPT-02>

## **CEC Opt-In Process**

On June 30, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill (AB) 205, which authorized the CEC to establish a new certification program for eligible non-fossil-fueled power plants and related facilities to optionally seek certification ("Opt-in" Certification) from the CEC. Requirements for the Opt-in Certification program are in Chapter 6.2, Division 15, of the Public Resources Code, sections 25545–25545.13. Regulations to implement the program can be found in California Code of Regulations, Title 20, sections 1875–1882. The Opt-in Certification program is in effect through June 30, 2029.

Under this new Opt-in Certification process, the types of facilities that can be certified by the CEC now includes solar photovoltaic and terrestrial wind energy power plants of 50 MW or more, energy storage facilities of 200 MWh or more, the electric transmission lines from these facilities to the first point of interconnection with the existing transmission grid, and facilities that manufacture or assemble clean energy or storage technologies or their components with a capital investment of at least \$250 million. In addition, thermal power plants of 50 MW or more that do not use fossil or nuclear fuels may choose the Opt-in Certification process rather than the CEC's Application for Certification process.

The CEC is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is required to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for any facility that elects to opt-in to the CEC's jurisdiction. With exceptions, the issuance of a certificate by the CEC for an eligible facility is in lieu of any permit, certificate, or similar document required by any state, local, or regional agency, or federal agency to the extent permitted by federal law, and supersedes any applicable statute, ordinance, or regulation of any state, local, or regional agency, or federal agency to the extent permitted by federal law. The CEC's authority under the Opt-in Certification program does not supersede the authorities of the California State Lands Commission, the California Coastal Commission, or the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, if applicable, the State Water Resources Control Board or applicable regional water quality control board, or, in the case of manufacturing facilities, the applicable local air quality management district or the Department of Toxic Substances Control.

The CEC is required to prepare an EIR and make its decision on the application within 270 days of receiving a complete application. The CEC will also conduct public meetings in the project area, including an informational and public scoping meeting during the development of the EIR, and a public workshop during the 60-day comment period on the Draft EIR, which will be included as part of the CEC's Staff Assessment of the application. After the conclusion of the public comment period, the CEC staff will publish an updated Staff Assessment (which will include a Final EIR), and the CEC's Executive Director's recommendation on whether the CEC should certify the EIR and issue a

certificate for construction and operation of the proposed project. The updated Staff Assessment and Executive Director's recommendation will be published at least 30 days before the CEC's decision at a public meeting.

The other agencies that retain their permitting authorities must take final action on any additional permits within 90 days of the CEC issuing a certificate.

### **Participation**

In addition to the tribal consultation required under CEQA and the Warren-Alquist Act, the CEC welcomes your participation in the Opt-in review process. Pursuant to the Public Resources Code, section 25545.7.4, we are providing the link to the Compass Energy Storage Project application, hosted on the CEC website at:

<https://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/battery-storage-system/compass-energy-storage-project>

To stay informed about this project and receive notice of upcoming meetings and workshops, sign up for the project subscription, which can be accessed on the same project webpage. Once enrolled, automatic email notifications are sent when documents and notices are posted to the project webpage.

The CEC staff welcomes your comments and questions, which are important to staff's analysis of the proposed project. Please do not hesitate to contact:

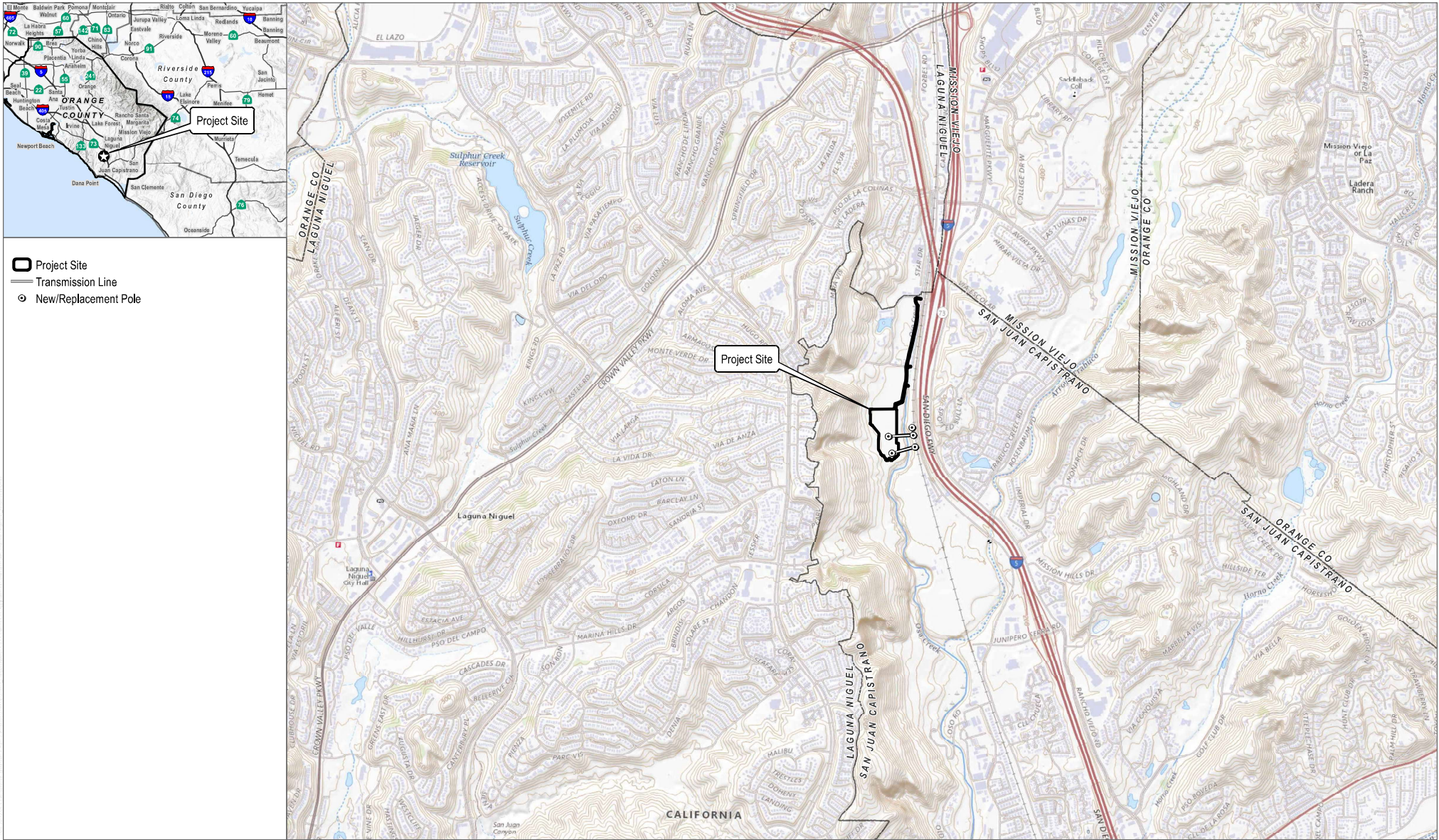
California Energy Commission  
ATTN: William Larson  
715 P Street, MS-16  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[william.larson@energy.ca.gov](mailto:william.larson@energy.ca.gov)  
530-304-9019

Sincerely,  
*Gabriel Roark*

Gabriel Roark  
Assistant Tribal Liaison, Siting & Compliance  
Supervisor, Cultural Resources Unit

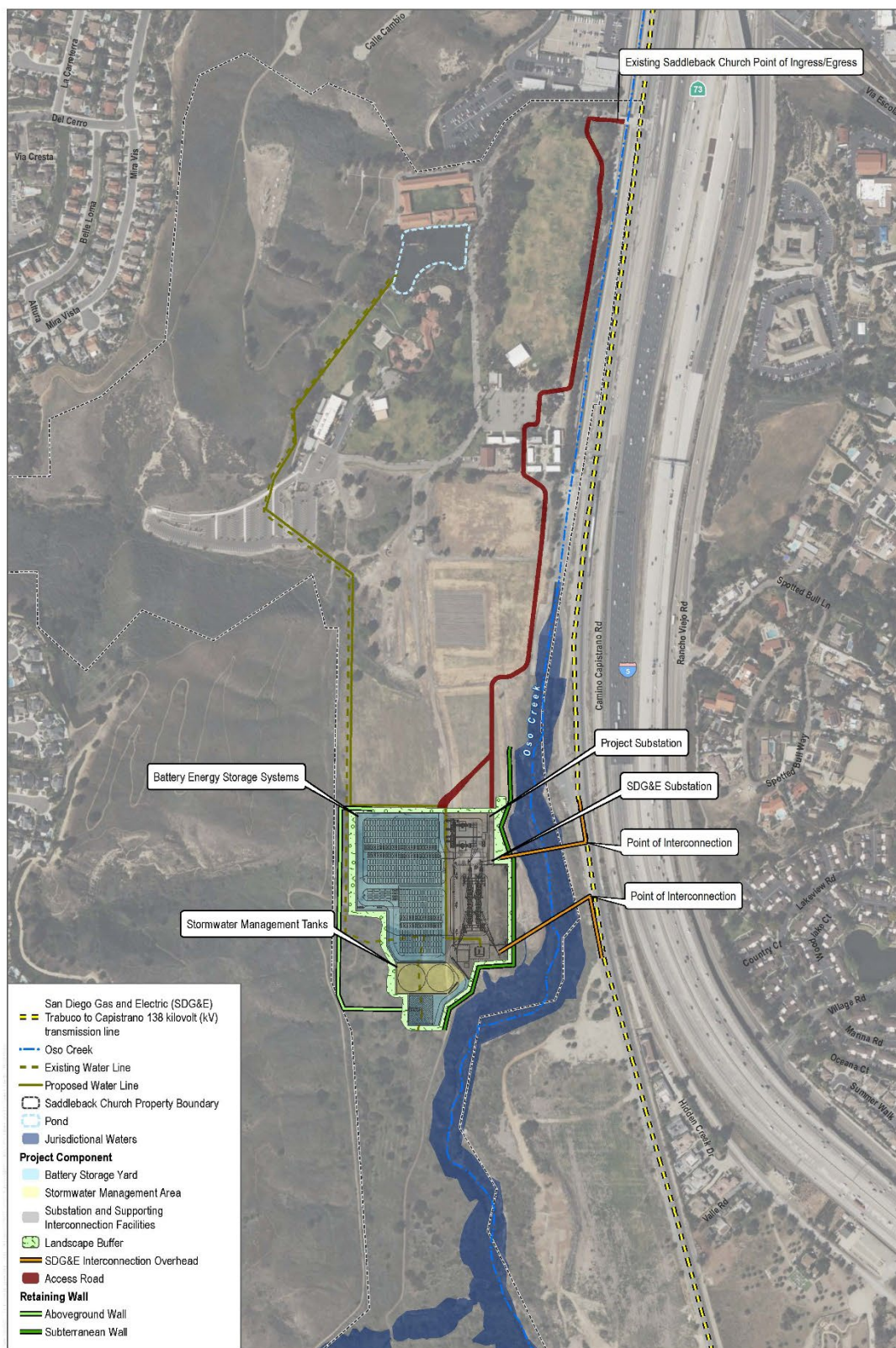
Attachments:  
Project Location Maps





**FIGURE 1-1**  
Project Vicinity  
Compass Energy Storage Project





SOURCE:



FIGURE 1

Site Plan

Compass